

**REMARKS**

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiekali (US Patent No. 5,619,500) in view of Bronstein et al. (US Patent No. 5,910,954). Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1 and 3-7 are pending. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims, as amended, are patentable for at least the following reasons.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 7 to overcome the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, rejections. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request removal of these rejections.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a communication system comprising a plurality of terminals which are connected to an access network, the access network having an access node connected to a transmission network and a non-dedicated network switch using a signaling protocol, the access node includes an access node switch coupled to the network switch, and a plurality of network control elements, wherein the access node switch controls all of the network specific switching without having to know a carrier frequency allocated to a terminal coupled to a sub-network, the network control elements include a network control switch, and a plurality of channel cluster modules, wherein the channel cluster modules are arranged for transmitting downstream signals on one carrier frequency and are coupled to the a sub-network corresponding to a network

control node, and wherein the transmission network comprises a plurality of sub-networks coupled to the network control elements.

Hiekali, as read by the applicants, relates to an ATM network which includes one or more ATM gateways for interfacing a plurality of T1 or fractional T1 signals with a higher bandwidth ATM network switch.

Bronstein, as read by the applicants, relates to a network having an emulated local area network (LAN) therein including groups of legacy LAN workstations, network switches and an ATM switch.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's indication that Hiekali teaches an access node connected to a transmission network and a non-dedicated network switch using a signaling protocol, the network control elements include a network control switch, and a plurality of channel cluster modules, wherein the channel cluster modules are arranged for transmitting downstream signals on one carrier frequency and are coupled to the a sub-network corresponding to a network control node in figs. 3-5, 8-10, abstract, col. 2, lines 5-33, col. 3 lines 3-59, col. 14 20-60.

On the contrary Hiekali, in these sections teaches an ATM network which includes one or more ATM gateways for interfacing a plurality of T1 or fractional T1 signals with a higher bandwidth ATM network switch. Data is stored in a memory, such as a video RAM, and pointers are utilized to indicate the type of each piece of data stored in the memory, including its priority for transmission to an ATM switch. A plurality of pointer pools is used, each corresponding to a data type having a given priority. Pointers are placed into an appropriate one of the pools to define the order in which data will be transferred to the ATM switch in accordance with the priority of the data type and the

receiving bandwidth of its destination in the ATM network. An HDLC controller is used which is suitable for framing a plurality of channels of data received on an incoming data path, such as a T1 channel. A single HDLC controller is used to provide appropriate framing of each channel in a multiplexed fashion, with intermediate HDLC states being stored in a temporary state memory for retrieval when the next set of bits for a given channel is received for processing by the HDLC controller. A plurality of buffer memories is used for storing intermediate data corresponding to each of the incoming channels. Accordingly, applicants fail to see how these elements teach, show or suggest the above limitations of the present invention.

Moreover, Applicants can find nothing in Hiekali or Bronstein, along or in combination, that teaches an access node including an access node switch coupled to the network switch, and a plurality of network control elements, wherein the access node switch controls all of the network specific switching without having to know a carrier frequency allocated to a terminal coupled to a sub-network, as recited in amended independent claim 1. Amended independent claims 7 recites similar limitations.


Since Hiekali and Bronstein, do not, along or in combination, teach, show or suggest all of the features of independent claims 1 and 7, as recited above, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 7, as amended, are patentable over Hiekali and Bronstein.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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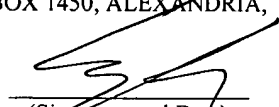
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